National Agriculture Policy

4149. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated its National Agriculture Policy and if so, when it is likely to be presented in parliament;

(b) whether the policy will address issues of exploitation of vast untapped potential of Indian Agriculture, strengthen rural infrastructure, promote value addition, accelerate the growth of agro-business, create employment in rural areas, secure a fair standard of living for the farmers and workers; and

(c) whether policy is based on future food security plan so as to double our food production and make India hunger free within ten years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) National Agriculture Policy is in the final stage of drafting.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir.

Modernisation of Kalpakkam Atomic Power Plant

4150. PROF. M. N. SHANKARALINGAM : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to modernise the Kalpakkam Atomic Energy Plant in Chennai;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether sufficient safety measures are being undertaken with the plant to avoid nuclear catastrophe?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Coolant Channels of MAPS-1 reactor are expected to be due for replacement during the next couple of years to enhance the life of the reactor by another 20 years. The replacement programme will be implemented during a long shut down of the plant, the timing of which will be decided based on in-service-inspection of the coolant channels. During this period, up-gradation of the safety systems of the plant installation of supplementary control room and modification of certain other systems to enhance the safety is proposed to be

implemented. Although the present operating and safety systems of the plant are adequate as per original design, up-gradation is contemplated to the extent applicable in line with the current safety standards. Similar exercise for MAPS-2 will also be carried out whenever the coolant channel replacement for this reactor will be due.

(c) The design of our Nuclear Power Plants follows the concepts of defence-indepth, diversity, redundancy to assure safety. Rigorous quality assurance programmes and safety reviews in the design, manufacture, construction and operation of nuclear power reactors are implemented by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited. Regular surveillance and internal/external audits are carried out to ensure high level of safety. Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) conducts safety reviews during all the stages of setting -up and operation of nuclear power plants through its multi-tier system of review. Any corrective action required based on such reviews are promptly attended to. AERB performs regulatory inspections every six months for verification of the safety of the plants. AERB also carries out in-depth safety assessment every five years in order to re-authorise further operation of the plant. In view of all these measures, there is no possibility of catastrophe.

Right to Maintain Minimum Nuclear Deterrent

4151. SHRI C. M. IMBRAHIM : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1566 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th March, 2000 and state :

(a) whether during the recent visit of US President to New Delhi, Government asserted that India has the right to maintain a minimum deterrent; and

(b) if so, whether the precise nature and extent of minimum nuclear deterrence has been defined as discussed with the US team or otherwise conceptualised, and the board features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir. India's decision is also reflected in the Vision Statement signed by the Prime Minister and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

(b) India and the US are engaged in an ongoing dialogue on security, non-proliferation and disarmament issues. This dialogue is predicated on India maintaining a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. India's minimum deterrent